

Capsule Summary
SM-108
Lower Brambley
Maddox Vicinity
Private

c. 1890-1900

Lower Brambley, constructed c. 1890s, is significant for its association with the Thomas family, the extent and quality of architectural decoration, as well as its well preserved agricultural setting. Overlooking the confluence of the Wicomico and Potomac Rivers, the dwelling is surrounded by 260 acres of cultivated fields of corn and soybean. Located perpendicular to an oak and cedar tree lined dirt drive, the two story, double-pile, side-passage plan dwelling with a two story wing stands prominently in the landscape. The building is clad with rarely used double-run siding that provides the illusion of thinly spaced clapboard. Another interesting feature is the open cornice that features false or "show" rafters. The interior, however, is particularly well appointed. The formal passage features a panelled stair box with an octagonal newel, turned balusters, and scroll sawn brackets. The parlors, connected by a pair of swinging panelled doors, each contain marbleized stone mantles with cross-shaped decorative motifs.

For much of the nineteenth century, Lower Brambley was the home of the Thomas family. Land records reveal that William H. Thomas, a locally prominent politician and farmer, owned the property for much of the early 1800s. In 1866 William died leaving a sizable estate that included Lower Brambley to his wife Eleanor and his children Mary (later Garner), George R., Matilda, and William H. Thomas, Jr. The property was transferred by the William's heirs to Truman Thomas in 1883. According to oral tradition, the original dwelling, an eighteenth century brick mansion, burned to the ground soon after the transaction. Judging from the architectural evidence, namely the stair construction, mantles, framing, and use of wire nails, the present house appears to have been built in the 1890s-1900s. Descendants of the Thomas family owned the property until 1955.

SM-108, Lower Brambley
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Industrial-Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Rural
Historic Function and Use:	Residence
Known Design Source:	None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-108

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Lower Brambley (pref.), Brambley

and/or common

2. Location

Lower Brambley Lane, approx 1 mile S of the intersection of Lower Brambley Lane and Route 238 (Maddox Rd.)
street & number not for publication

city, town Maddox ☒ vicinity of congressional district 7

state Maryland county St. Mary's County TM-29, B-24, P-6

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Nancy D. Wolfe and Lawrence T. Wolfe

street & number telephone no.: 301-769-2820

city, town Chaptico state and zip code Md 20621

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 369

street & number folio 321

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Lower Brambley

date August, 1970 ☐ federal ☒ state ☒ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. SM-108

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resources: 2

Lower Brambley is situated down a dirt road 1.7 miles southwest of the intersection of Notley Hall Road and Maddox Road (Route 238) near Maddox, Maryland. The house, surrounded by cultivated corn and soybean fields, is situated on a 250 acre parcel overlooking the Potomac and Wicomico Rivers. The dwelling is oriented on a northeast/southwest axis and is approached via a dirt road that is on axis with the land side elevation of the house. Several large trees, including a very large willow oak, line the road.

Lower Brambley, constructed c. 1890s, is a two-and-a-half story, three bay, frame dwelling with a side-passage, double-pile plan and a two story gable end service ell. The house is situated on a roughly fired brick foundation and the exterior walls are sheathed with "double-worked" siding (Note: Here "double worked" refers an individual clapboard that features a pair of bullnose moldings in profile.). The current owner, Nancy Wolfe, is preserving the original sheathing beneath vinyl siding. The open cornice is emphasized by purely decorative rafter tails. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles and is pierced by two interior end brick chimneys on the main block and a single chimney flue on the two story ell. All of these chimneys have been rebuilt due to significant deterioration. A small frame dairy is located just to the south of the ell.

The primary or northeast (land side) elevation of the main block is pierced by three symmetrically placed bays on the first and second floors. The first floor bays consist of two, two-over-two, double-hung sash windows and a four panel (the upper two panels exhibit rounded tops) door bounded on each side by a sidelight and by a three light transom overhead. All of these bays are shaded by a porch that is supported by four Tuscan columns. The second floor is pierced by three, two-over-two windows. The half story is lit by a pair of gable dormers whose sides are covered with cedar shingles. The original two-over-two windows have been replaced by paired, one light, modern swinging windows. The two story ell juts back from the main block and is pierced on the first and second floor by modern one-over-one windows. These replaced the previous sash that were all six-over-six windows. The ell's open cornice (as well as the cornice of the entire dwelling) features decorative rafter tails while the roof exhibits a single hip on the southeast side.

The southeast elevation of the dwelling features the gable end of the main block and ell. The main block is pierced on the second floor by a two-over-two window that lights the southeast corner room and a centrally placed two-over-two window that lights the half story. The ell is pierced on the first floor by a four panel door that leads to the original kitchen. An original gable roof awning shelters the doorway. The second floor is pierced on the second floor by a one-over-one window.

The southwest (or waterside) elevation of the main block is largely identical to that of the northeast side. The first floor of the main block is pierced by two, two-over-two windows and a four panel door (the top two panels with rounded tops) that is flanked on each side by sidelights with a three light transom over the whole. The second floor features three, two-over-two windows while the half story is lit by two gable dormers. The dormers each feature a set of paired, one light swinging windows. At the juncture of the main block and service ell is a projecting bay. The front of the bay is pierced by a set of paired one-over-one windows. The northwest side is pierced by a modern door.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-108

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
and/or	
Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Lower Brambley, constructed in the last quarter of nineteenth century, is significant for its association with the Thomas family, the extent and quality of architectural decoration, as well as its well preserved agricultural setting. Overlooking the confluence of the Wicomico and Potomac Rivers, the dwelling is surrounded by 260 acres of cultivated fields of corn and soybean. Located perpendicular to an oak and cedar tree lined dirt drive, the two story, double-pile, side-passage plan dwelling with a two story wing stands prominently in the landscape. The building is clad with rarely used double-run siding that provides the illusion of thinly spaced clapboard. Another interesting feature is the open cornice that features false or "show" rafters. The interior, however, is particularly well appointed. The formal passage features a panelled stair box with an octagonal newel, turned balusters, and scroll sawn brackets. The parlors, connected by a pair of swinging panelled doors, each contain marbleized stone mantles with cross-shaped decorative inlays.

For much of the nineteenth century, Lower Brambley was the home of the Thomas family. Land records reveal that William H. Thomas, a locally prominent politician and farmer, owned the property for much of the early 1800s. In 1866, William died leaving a sizable estate that included Lower Brambley to his wife Eleanor and his children Mary (later Garner), George R., Matilda, George, and William H. Thomas, Jr. The property was transferred by William's heirs to Truman Thomas in 1883. According to oral tradition, the original dwelling was an eighteenth century brick mansion, but this earlier structure burned to the ground soon after the transaction. Judging from the architectural evidence, namely the stair construction, mantles, framing, and use of wire nails, the present house appears to have been built c. 1890s. Descendants of the Thomas family owned the property until 1955.

Survey No. SM-108

PS-2746

SM-108, Lower Brambley
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

The northwest gable end of the main block is pierced on the first and second floor by a single two-over-two window.

The interior of the main block is organized into a side-passage, double-pile plan. The large side passage features four panel doors to the front and rear parlor as well as an open string stair to the second floor. The stair features an octagonal turned newel, turned balusters, scroll sawn brackets and panelling. Each of parlors, connected by a set of two large four panel doors, feature a marble mantle inlaid on the two sides and frieze by crosses. Both parlors also feature baseboards as well as window and door surrounds. The second floor of the main block features a passage that permits entry into three bedrooms. Two of the bedrooms feature wood mantles that exhibit reeding as well as several round knobs on the two sides and frieze. The attic story is entered via the passage through a narrow enclosed stair. The attic is largely unfinished with the kneewalls roughly plastered but the remaining walls left bare to the studs and rafters. The roof features a common rafter framing system. The framing members are circular sawn dimensional lumber and held in place with early wire nails. The rafters rest on a false plate. Each rafter pair corresponds to the floor joists below. They are also joined together by ties that are merely lapped and nailed to the individual rafters. The rafters are joined at the roof peak with a butt joint.

The ell is entered from the waterside parlor on the first floor while there are two entrances from the main block to the second floor of the ell. Overall, the ell's decorative treatments signal its secondary importance. As a service wing, its staircase, window and door treatments, and spatial organization received less decoration. The ell's first floor originally featured three rooms. The room closest to the main block historically served as a chamber, study, and possibly food preparation area. It features a single wood mantle similar to that found in the two upstairs bedrooms of the main block. To the southwest of this chamber is a stair hall that features entrances to the main block, the original kitchen and pantry, the second floor of the ell, and the exterior. The stair in the passage did not receive much decorative attention as it features a square newel and handrail with rounded edges as well as plain square balusters. The original door to the exterior has been removed and replaced by a projecting bay that overlooks the river. The second floor of the ell originally featured a stairhall, two bedrooms, and a bathroom. The bedroom closest to the main block featured a wood mantle similar to those found in the main block. The bedroom furthest from the main block was originally roughly plastered and probably served as the servants' bedroom.

SM-108, Lower Brambley
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber MRB 369, Folio 321

Grantee: Nancy D. and Lawrence T. Wolfe

Grantor: Nancy D. Wolfe--personal representative for the estate of Harold A. Wolfe.

Date: August 3, 1987

Notes: This deed describes the transfer of "Part of Brambly" or "Lower Brambly" consisting of 260 1/2 acres. It also includes the transfer of the 195 15/100 acre tract called "Brambly Woodland."

Reference: Liber CBG 56, Folio 293

Grantee: Augustus C. F. Wolfe and Harold W. A. Wolfe

Grantor: Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Company, trustee

Date: April 27, 1955

Notes: After the death of A. Dana Hodgdon on or before December 14, 1944, the Mercantile company took possession of the property that Hodgdon had taken out a mortgage on. The St. Mary's Circuit Court of Equity (Case # A 510) ordered the sale of the property and it was sold to the Wolfes for \$47,500.

Reference: Liber JFF 6, Folio 395

Grantee: Truman H. Thomas

Grantor: Eleanor Thomas, et al

Date: June 1, 1883

Notes: In 1866, William H. Thomas died leaving his property called "Brambley" to his wife Eleanor Thomas and his children Matilda, George, William H., Jr., George R. and Mary Garner. In his will (Liber JTMR 1, Folio 171), William H. Thomas, Sr. stipulated that his brother Dr. James Thomas and his brother-in-law James Mackubin manage his estate. It was soon after the execution of this will that Truman H. Thomas erected the present frame dwelling at "Lower Brambley." William H. Thomas had received the property via the will of his father George Thomas.

Reference: Liber JH 10, Folio 530

Grantee: George Thomas

Grantor: Edward I. Heard

Date: October 10, 1836

Notes: The deed documents the transfer of Brambly which contains 397 1/2 acres as well as Llewellens lots.

Reference: Liber JH 9, Folio 480

Grantee: Edward I. Heard

Grantor: Joseph Stone

Date: June 10, 1836

Notes: This deed notes that Brambly and Llewellen's lots had formerly been owned by "Richard Jordan (now deceased) and more recently {by} a certain Jeremiah Booth.

S' M -108
LOWER BRAMBLEY
Bushwood
Private

circa 1875

The house at Lower Brambley on the Wicomico River was built about 1875. It is a frame, clapboard-covered building with a hipped roof, double dormers and a large wing. It was the home of Truman H. Thomas.

Lower Brambley and Upper Brambley^(S'M-185) are part of the land granted to Dr. Thomas Gerard in various grants beginning in 1639. It is said that Brambley is a corrupted form of "Bromley," ^{the name of} Dr. Gerard's estate in England.

Also see archeological listing S'M -185.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

1901085504

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Brambley, Lower Brambley
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: Bushwood
STATE: Maryland COUNTY: St. Mary's

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION:	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted
				<input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Longview Beach Club
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
St. Mary's County Courthouse
STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington Street and Courthouse Drive
CITY OR TOWN: Leonardtown STATE: Maryland

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

[illegible]

(Check One)

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

(Check One)

☐ Altered ☐ Unclassified☐ Moved ☐ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1930s

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ROCK POINT QUAD

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	0	'	"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	0	'	"
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"	0	'	"
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"	0	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Bourne

ORGANIZATION

DATE

8-70

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE

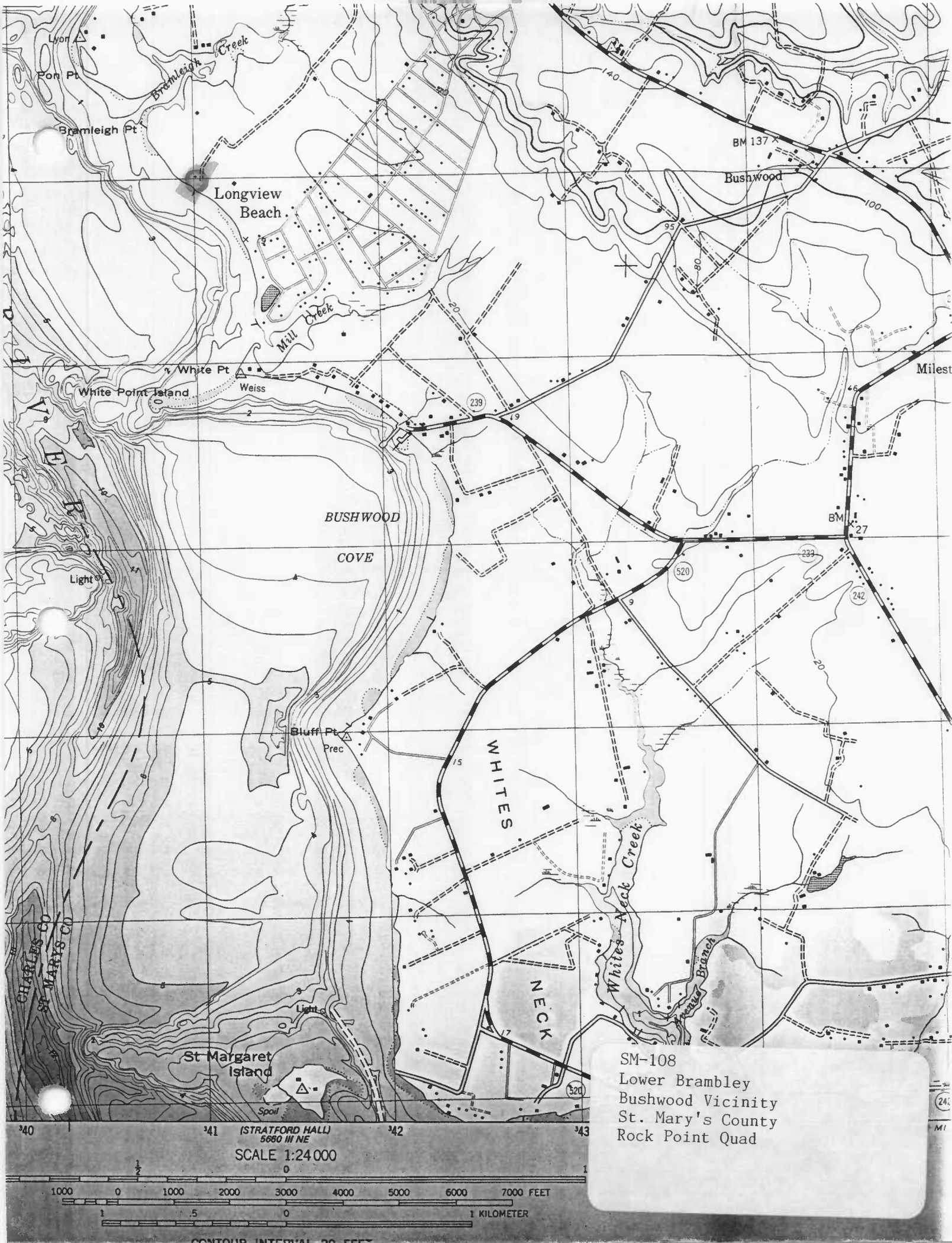
12.

State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Signature



SM-108
Lower Brambley
Bushwood Vicinity
St. Mary's County
Rock Point Quad





214-108

Lower Kromeley

34 Mary's County

Clark Kromeley

Oct 1929

11 SHPO

214-108

84



SM-108

Lower Brambley

St Mary's County

Kirk Parnell

Oct 1997

Mid SHPO

T. & C. (lion looking in)

3 of 4



SM-108

Lower Brantley

St. Mary's County

Kirk Rancey

2nd 1997

MD 5110

Maritime Park looking S

1 of 4